

Regents' Policy Manual - Section 1.6: Special Recognition and Awards

Adopted Date: 09-12-1996

Amended: 11-14-1996

Applicability

This policy applies to awards of honorary degrees and other types of special recognition given on behalf of the University at the discretion of the Board of Regents. This policy does not preclude other kinds of awards and recognition by other units or officials of the University.

Policy

It is the practice of the Board of Regents of the University to recognize from time to time the contributions of special people to the University, to the state of New Mexico, or to the national or international community. The Board has established the following awards for this purpose.

1. **Honorary Degrees.** The University of New Mexico wishes to recognize and thereby encourage individuals by awarding special honors to those persons who have contributed significantly to the cultural or scientific development of the Southwest, or to the spiritual or material welfare of its people. At the same time, due regard should be paid to eminent individuals and scholars whose contributions are of general significance and transcend geographic limitations. In no case should a passing courtesy to the University of New Mexico, such as the delivery of a commencement address, be the sole or principal cause for such honorary awards. The award of an honorary degree to a person seeking or holding a political office does not indicate endorsement by the University of New Mexico. Political involvement should not prevent selection of an individual for an honorary degree.

It is not the University's policy to award honorary degrees to active members of the faculty, staff, or administration. This does not preclude, in an exceptional case, the awarding of an honorary degree to an emeritus member of the faculty or to a former employee whose stature remains or becomes eminent in the years following active service with the University. In such exceptions, sufficient time shall have elapsed to insure objectivity in the process of selection.

Honorary degrees will be awarded only upon the approval of the [University faculty and the Regents](#), based on recommendations from the Honorary Degree Committee, whose membership is set out in the Faculty Handbook.

2. **Regents' Meritorious Service Medal.** The Regents' Meritorious Service Medal will be awarded to a member or members of the faculty and staff of the University of New Mexico in recognition of extraordinary and distinguished service to the University.

The criteria for the faculty award will be outstanding teaching, service to students, research, scholarship, publications, performance in faculty and University governance, or other such contributions which have enhanced the institution.

The criteria for the staff award will be outstanding performance of duties and meritorious service which have enhanced the University.

Nominations for these awards may be submitted to the President by students, faculty, and staff. The final decision will be made by the Regents.

3. **Regents' Recognition Medal.** The Regents' Recognition Medal will be awarded by the Regents of the University of New Mexico to a person or persons, other than faculty or staff, who have performed outstanding service to the institution.

The criteria for the award will be extraordinary and unselfish assistance to the University over an extended period of time. However, a single service might be recognized if, in the judgment of the Regents, circumstances warrant. Selection will be made by the Regents.

4. **The University Medal.** The University Medal will be awarded by the Regents of the University of New Mexico to a person of national or international accomplishment deserving of high honor.

In keeping with the universal nature of the knowledge and public service which are embodied in the very essence of the University, the University Medal will be used to express the appreciation of the University for the accomplishments and contributions of the individual, which may be in any field of knowledge or public service of national or international character. No limits of residence or national origin are to be placed on this award.

Since the desirability of honoring such persons should be both obvious and compelling, the Regents will not grant this award on a systematic basis, nor institute fixed time periods for making the award. The medal will be awarded only in the event that the attainments of a qualified individual are such that the administration and Regents are persuaded that this rare and special recognition is clearly deserved.

5. **Special Commendation.** A special commendation may be awarded to particularly meritorious nominees for any of the Regents' Meritorious Service Medal, the Regents' Recognition Medal or the University Medal.

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Implementation

Potential recipients of the Regents' Meritorious Service Medal, Regents' Recognition Medal, The University Medal and the Special Commendation will be reviewed by the Regents' Special Recognition and Awards Committee appointed by the University President and approved by the Chair of the Regents. The Committee will review the nominations and charge and compile recommendations to present to the Board of Regents. The Regents Special Recognition and Awards Committee membership will include: At least one (1) member selected by the University President; one (1) member of the general faculty recommended by the Faculty Senate; one (1) staff member recommended by Staff Council; one (1) member recommended by the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) and one (1) member recommended by the Associated Students of the University of New Mexico. Additionally, the University President will appoint the committee chair from within or outside this membership and may add additional representation from the UNM Foundation, health sciences, athletics, branch campuses, alumni and other constituent groups.

Commented [RS1]: This is all taken from Terry's draft.

Except for the Special Commendations, awards will be a silver alloy medal, or other appropriate device, bearing, as appropriate and as room permits, the seal of the University of New Mexico and other appropriate designs and will be accompanied by a certificate upon which the nature of the service will be cited. The Special Commendation shall be in the form of a certificate.